



Balkan Print Forum News

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*The Fourth Balkan Print Forum meeting will take place
on 22 and 23 October, 2009 in Bucharest, Romania.*

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Interview with Mr. Thomas Hauser, Vice President Corporate Marketing & Communications, manroland AG

Nowadays the printing industry feels very strongly the last worldwide financial and economic crisis. It is a very hard time for manufacturers, for printers and for everyone connected with the printing media. The crisis, however, can be considered also as a new chance. Mr. Hauser, where do you see the chances of this crisis for manroland and for the printing industry worldwide?

Thomas Hauser: The financial crisis, recession and deferred investments are of course great challenges for us and our customers. In 2009 the entire industry will need to be very flexible in adapting to the changed environment and make sure it is in good shape for the time when the crisis has passed. The reluctance to invest is impacting on us as a press manufacturer, as are the cuts in the marketing and communication budgets of the advertising industry which affect the printing community as a whole. Besides the current economic crisis, the printing industry faces structural challenges and the consolidation in some areas is in progress. One way to meet the challenges is for the printing industry to market itself better; the perception of print media needs to be strengthened. This is a prerequisite for the long-term success of printing and media companies in the highly competitive media environment. We have to show the public which options are offered by our printing industry and the capacities therein.

We have to show customers, i.e. the print buyers, which innovations and business models are available. If this works, we will be using this period of uncertainty sensibly and might even shorten the crisis. This is why manroland is actively accompanying the printing industry in its present process of change. A great example is the Balkan Print Forum. Other examples of our commitment are our partnership with the WAN (World Association of Newspaper) and our membership in the International Packaging Group (IPG). A further important partnership for manroland is Print-City, a Strategic Alliance that shares worldwide expertise from independent companies in the graphic arts industry.

Mr. Hauser, we are almost convinced that the crucial challenges of this crisis have still not taken place. In January, 2009 manroland has implemented a package of measures to safeguard its future and has started a new marketing campaign. All these measures are expected to contribute to manroland coming out of the crises stronger than before. What can you advise your customers today to stress upon? Where should the printing companies focus on in order to come out as a winner of the crisis?

Thomas Hauser: Today printing companies should not follow any short-term hype; they have to reach and fulfill a business model and scheduled goals. Each individual printing company of course has to orient itself on the future, have a clear business model, and position itself as unique as possible in the marketplace. How can one produce faster and less expensively in order to increase production efficiency? How can one raise product value and quality? Which product applications can one offer customers that grow their business as well? Besides that, production should be based on effective, efficient and ecologically sustainable methods. Still, at the end of the day, it's about cutting costs and raising revenues. These are questions that a printing company has to answer in order to deal with a recession.

Regarding the main objectives of the Balkan Print Forum is to afford new contacts, knowledge communication, exchanging experience, informing about the latest trends, technologies and perspectives in the printing and media industry. manroland, the patron of the Balkan Print Forum, is ready to support the printing industry of the region in improving the quality, profitability and competitiveness of the printing companies and print media, as well as improving the education of their print specialists.



Three years ago manroland was very active in starting the Balkan Print Forum initiative and continues to support it intensely. The printing associations of ten Balkan countries and of Hungary consider it very important as a platform for communication and exchange of experience. How important is the region for manroland and which, do you think, are the strong sides of the printing industry in the Balkan countries?

Thomas Hauser: For manroland the Balkan region is an important, vital and future oriented market. manroland just introduced a Managing Director especially for Romania, Mr. Dan Teodorescu, because we have to be close to this market with its potential. Since drupa 2008 the member countries of the Balkan Print Forum grew up to 11: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey. That shows the enthusiasm of the Balkan printing industry. A further strong side of the printing industry in the Balkans is their openness to experience. Print houses in Eastern Europe invest in groundbreaking technology to reach a strong market position.

Here we offer technology like inline enhancement, plus formats and substrate versatility, which is getting more and more popular.

For example: the first ROLAND 900, XXL in the 7B plus format were installed in Slovenia. And now the first ROLAND 700 DirectDrive, this innovative sheet-fed technology, will be installed in the Balkan region, in Bulgaria. Further Turkey is a growing and future oriented market and very important in the future plans of manroland. The expectations of decision-makers in Balkan printing companies are high, they place high demands on innovations and developments, and are prepared to invest. Here the technology of a printing system is of course a major criterion but the total package “press plus service” is becoming increasingly important for customers in order to optimize processes and lifecycle costs of the whole investment. This package must precisely match each customer’s business model, and this is a process we develop jointly with the customers.

Here we can say today: the “Value Added Printing” strategy that we initiated in recent years has been very well accepted. Customers are looking for solutions to increase production efficiency and product value. We can provide the technology for this and will be developing it further. The tendency towards enhanced customer care, giving them the services they need, is plain to see.

The state of development of the Balkan printing industry is on a different level in the different countries. However, there are common problems, e.g. lack of specialists, of new technological solutions, of process standardization, of ecological printing technologies etc. The development in the last years was very intensive, but the financial crisis causes serious investment problems for the printers on the Balkans. Mr. Hauser, what is your suggestion to the printing companies of the Balkan countries to make possible their come back to the positive trend?

Thomas Hauser: One the one side I suggest to follow the struck new paths like the cooperation in the Balkan Print Forum. It gives the initiators the chance to intensify customer contacts, to support the regional print and media market and to develop the exchange of experiences within the region. Last but not least the Forum is supposed to offer the Balkan print community a stable and sustainable added value discussion platform. These aspects strengthen the industry for the time after the crisis.

Another aspect is the qualification of the printers in the Balkan countries, here is sometimes a backlog. We offer the manroland Training in our Print Technology Centers. Because an important condition for the optimum use of our products is a highly qualified workforce.

Regarding to our business printing systems and services, we support print houses by jointly developing business models and implementing them together with them.

With sophisticated press technology and our ever-more important PRINTVALUE brands: **printservices** for services such as maintenance throughout the life cycle of a printing system; **printcom** for process-compliant system components, i.e. consumables such as blankets and ink; **printnet** for print shop networking and **printadvice** for consultation services.

The total package of “press and service” has become more and more important for many customers. Printing companies can develop and adjust their business models for a solid business during the crisis and a successful business after the crises.

Mr. Hauser, thank you very much for this very interesting interview.

Five colour ROLAND 700 DirectDrive in Operation in Bulgaria

A very significant event for manroland Bulgaria was the recent production start of the first in the region five colour Roland 700 DirectDrive printing machine, purchased by the company Billboard print, Varna.

Info: manroland Bulgaria



Printing Industry Union of Bulgaria April Meeting

The economic crisis and the inter-firm debts were the most important issues discussed at the meeting by more than 100 representatives of the largest Bulgarian printing companies, members of the Printing Industry Union of Bulgaria.

Most of the managers shared the opinion that the number of orders is decreasing steadily, as well as the business activities. "Nevertheless, the decreasing of prices of print products should not be the right decision at the moment because this can exhaust all the potential of the printing house", pointed out the colleagues.

Mr. Dragomir Stoynev, the economic advisor to the Bulgarian Prime Minister, invited at the meeting, advanced the opinion that the months from September till December 2009 are expected to be the most difficult for the business in the country. The government has worked out three scenarios to cope with the crisis, but there is no economic expert who ventures to predict how the Bulgarian economy will develop in the near future. According to the official information Bulgaria has one of the most stable fiscal policies in Europe after the Scandinavian countries.



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The most important question discussed at the April meeting of the Printing Industry Union of Bulgaria was the inter-firm debt of companies which is probably the biggest problem of the Bulgarian printers. There has been always some delay of payments or customers who were not paying their accounts, but now, in terms of crisis, this can cause big problems for some companies. Recommended were the old known solutions of such an issue – advance payment and delivery of the printed products after the final payment. According to experts this approach is a recovery rather than deterioration of the business climate.

The president of the Printing Industry Union of Bulgaria Mr. Petar Kanev noted that now is the best moment for investments as only the new technologies can strengthen the position of the printing houses and can help them come out of the crises stronger than before.

It has been announced that the Bulgarian trade fair PrintCom will take place in Plovdiv from 2nd till 6th of June 2009. The next edition of the print exhibition is planned for June 2011.

Info: Printing Industry Union of Bulgaria

The 5th Printing Technology Seminar in Bosnia and Herzegovina "Trends in Prepress"

The Association of Printing Industry within the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized recently the 5th Printing Technology Seminar on "Trends in Prepress". The aim of the seminar is to introduce modern prepress processes and equipment to managers and specialists working in the printing companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The lectures were presented by experts from the printing industry and by representatives of well-known foreign producers of modern printing equipment.



The seminar was opened by the President of the Association of Printing Industry within the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the welcoming address of Mr. Mahir Hadžiahmetović, President of the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the participants were briefed on the calculation process of printing products. The representative of the Printing Engineering and Design Department, Section of Printing Faculty in Kiseljak, Bosnia and Herzegovina, presented "Improvement of the cal-

ulation process of printing products”. The subject was very interesting and initiated a long dispute among the participants of the seminar. The lecturer continued with “The advantages of frequency–modulated compared to amplitude–modulated screening for the reproduction of multicolour multi shade originals”. This interesting and innovative lecture presented the results of a long term research and experience.

The Sales Director of New Deal Company, Belgrade, Serbia, presented the advantages of Violet CTP Technology. The Director of Agfa Gevaert GmbH Vienna, Office Zagreb, Croatia, briefed on Agfa non–chemical CTP plates as a solution for the ecological future. Both lectures presented the trends and high-tech achievements related to CTP devices.

The Sales Manager of Grafik.Net, Zagreb, Croatia, talked about thermal technology and processless plates, giving a practical example of calculation. At the end of the seminar, the Development Director of Grafik.Net presented “How to be different on the market”. In his lecture he spoke also about MGI Company's added value strategy and made a survey of the digital printing market.

More than 50 participants attended the seminar and took an active part in the discussions. The general impression is that the seminar was very well organized and extremely useful for the attendees. That was confirmed also by the representatives of the printing companies and the participating lecturers.

Info: Ms Selma Bašagić, Secretary of the Association of Printing Industry, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Graphica – Expo Pack in Athens

GRAPHICA, one of the biggest Graphic Arts exhibitions, will take place at the new Exhibition Centre ATHENS METROPOLITAN EXPO from May 29th till June 1st 2009. GRAPHICA will be staged in conjunction with EXPOPACK, the new event in Greece, dedicated to processing and packaging technology.

According to the organizer COMEX HELLAS, more than 140 firms announced their participation. Dozens of companies working in the field of printing and packaging are going to invest in this exhibition. “The Greek Graphic Arts market is still a growing market and I hope that this growth will continue”, said Mr. Douzinas, the general manager of COMEX.

Info: TYPOGRAPHIA magazine, Greece

Annual General Assembly of Intergraf in Athens

The Board of Directors of the Hellenic Federation of Printing Media Communication accepted the proposal of the International Confederation for Printing and Allied Industries Intergraf to organize under its auspices the Annual General Assembly of Intergraf, which will take place from Thursday, 11th of June until Sunday, 14th of June 2009 in the Electra Palace Hotel in Athens.

SEMEE, in collaboration with Intergraf, has taken the responsibility to organize the congress and the social events intending to fully promote and represent the Greek Printing Industry and the Federation.

For the first time the General Assembly will take place in Greece and it is considered as the most important European Congress of Graphic Arts.

Info: SEMEE, Hellenic Federation of Printing Media Communication

A Reason for Panic or a Motive for “Cleaning up”

It is well-known that the Graphic Arts market in Greece is not one of the largest markets globally, but it is for sure one of the much promising markets due to the willingness of the print business to follow the technological progress in the industry.

As expected, Greece is also struck by the economic crisis and recession, but fortunately not at the extent that has been observed in some more developed industrial countries. However, the result is the same: significant reduction of investments and inability of smooth operations. The banks reduce their support for the business or are not able to help everyone.

Printers, producers and suppliers, considering their current experience, presume that some positive results can also be expected. Managers assume that this situation can be seen as an opportunity for reorganization, analysing faults and evaluation of wrong decisions, thus reducing the consequences of the recession and finally taking the appropriate decisions.

Recently someone suggested at a press conference in Greece: “Let's lose now whatever we have to lose, in order to lose less in the future”. This statement reflects completely the business atmosphere in the country.

At present all the sectors of the Graphic Arts industry in Greece are affected by the crisis to a greater or lesser extent. All the printers have estimated the situation and are taking the necessary measures. Most of the managers are convinced that those who are consistent and abstinent will survive. At the same time a cleaning up will take place in the print market.

Nikolas Raftopoulos
TYPOGRAPHIA magazine, Greece

News from Turkey

At the end of February this year the General Assembly of BASEV elected the new Executive Board of the Foundation. Mr. Aysan Sakar has been re-elected as BASEV President, Mr. Ozdemir Korkmaz – Deputy President, Mr. Akif Kazmaz – Secretary General and Mr. Alparslan Baloglu – Accountant. The new members of the board are: Mr. Tolga Urkmezigil, Mr. Metin Ciftcioğlu, Mr. Hasan Kondu, Mr. Sermet Tolan, Mr. Ercan Apa, Mr. Abdullah Kamil Guzey, Ms. Ayse Kosebay, Ms. Gamze Aksoy, Ms. Nesrin Kural and Ms. Banu Tuncbilek Saner.

For the next months BASEV is planning and organising some seminars concerning Certifications in the printing industry and ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning).

Very important for BASEV is the Intergraf associate membership that starts officially this year. BASEV representatives will attend the General Assembly of Intergraf in Athens this June.

Info: BASEV, Turkey

News from Serbia

IFRA South East Europe Conference

The conference will take place on 18th and 19th of June 2009 in Hotel Dubrovnik, Zagreb, Croatia.

The 4th edition of this important regional event will bring together the news publishing and suppliers community to meet and discuss the latest international developments and the new trends in the region. With this sequence of case studies and presentations of successful business models, this yearly event is an important regional forum for new ideas and innovation as well as an ideal platform for networking. The conference presentations will cover the following topics: Affordable Investments; Attractive Design; Innovative Advertising; Ink Saving.

For more information: www.ifra.com/events

Serbia, Vojvodina

The vice-president of the Executive Council of Vojvodina and information secretary of the province Ana Tomanova Mankanova welcomed the General Director of “Dnevnik Vojvodina press” Dusan Vlaović and pointed out that “Dnevnik” is a very important daily newspaper for the Vojvodina region. However, the accumulated problems in the holding, which started several years ago, have significantly influence the production not only of this newspaper, but also of other issues with long tradition, such as “Farmer”, ”Good morning” and others. Therefore, the regional government has sent a request to convert the existing debts of the republican government and in this way to provide conditions for the sale of the holding. The Direktor Vlaović expressed his thanks for the support of the regional government and emphasized that the recent changes of the editorial structure have contributed to new, better relations in the newsroom.

Serbia, Belgrade

At the end of 2008 ABC Srbija had 41 members and 43 verifying the title, which comprises 80 % of the total circulation of daily newspapers and 90 % of the total magazine circulation in Serbia. Some titles which belong to the biggest publishers, such as Ringier, Vecernje news, Politics, Press, Color Press and others have been discussed at the recent board meeting of ABC Srbija. Point of discussion was also the economic crisis that have conquered the Serbian media scene and is expected to influence the global publishing and marketing industry.

Info: Union of Graphic Engineers and Technicians of Serbia

Events in Slovenia

Forum: **Specialists for the 21st Century**
Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering,
University of Ljubljana, 16.06.2009 – 16.06.2009

Seminar: **3D Technologies and Global Challenges**
IB-PROCADD d. o. o., Institute SDT, UP Faculty for
Management Koper, 13.07.2009 – 14.07.2009

28. Graphic Biennial, 04.09.2009 – 25.10.2009
MGLC, Ministry of Culture of RS, Ljubljana



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